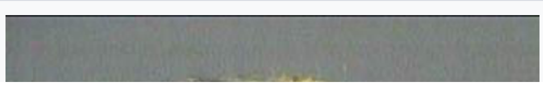
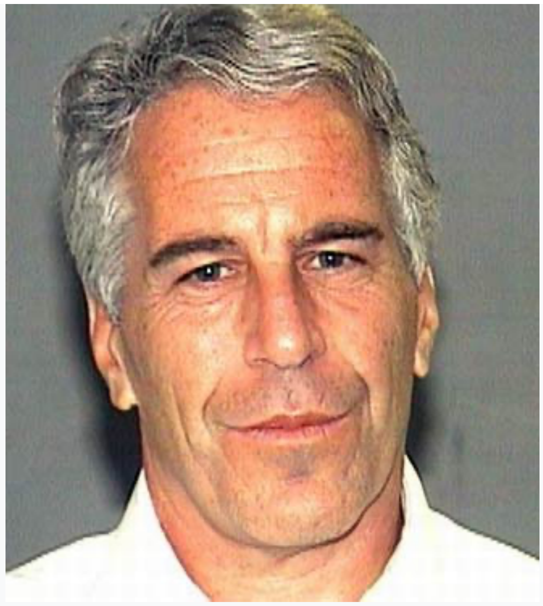
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Jeffrey Epstein

Jeffrey Edward Epstein[b] (January 20, 1953 – August 10, 2019) was an American financier and child sex offender. He began his career as a math teacher, before entering the banking and finance sector. He made much of his fortune providing tax and estate services to billionaires. Over the course of several decades, he cultivated an elite social circle of prominent individuals. In 2008, he was convicted of soliciting a minor for prostitution, and was indicted in 2019 for sex trafficking minors in the 2000s. He died in custody awaiting his trial, his death ruled a suicide.

Jeffrey Epstein





Mug shot of Epstein, 2006

Born	Jeffrey Edward Epstein January 20, 1953 New York City, U.S.
Died	August 10, 2019

	(aged 66) Metropolitan Correctional Center, New York City, U.S.
Cause of death	Suicide by hanging
Resting place	Star of David Cemetery, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, U.S.
Other names	Marius Robert

	Fortelni[6]
Education	Cooper Union (no degree) New York University (no degree)
Occupations	Financier · broker · educator
Employers	Dalton School Bear Stearns Intercontinental Assets Group

	Towers Financial Corporation J. Epstein & Company
Criminal status	Deceased
Relatives	Mark Epstein (brother)
Convictions	Procuring a child for prostitution · sex trafficking (2008)
Criminal charge	Sex trafficking

	(2019)
Penalty	13 months' imprisonment (2008)
Accomplice	Ghislaine Maxwell Jean-Luc Brunel[1][2] Les Wexner (alleged)[1][2] Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem (alleged)[1][2]

	Lesley Groff (alleged)[3]
Details	
Victims	1,000+[a]
Date apprehended	July 27, 2006 (first criminal case) July 6, 2019 (second criminal case)
Signature	



In 2005, police in Palm Beach, Florida, began investigating Epstein after a parent reported that he had sexually abused her 14-year-old daughter. Investigators identified 36 girls between the ages of 14 and 17, whom Epstein had allegedly sexually abused. Epstein pleaded guilty and was convicted in 2008 by a Florida state court of procuring a child for prostitution and of soliciting a prostitute. He was convicted as part of a plea deal agreed by Alexander Acosta of the U.S. Department of Justice. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison, serving 13 months.

Epstein was arrested again on July 6, 2019, on federal charges for the sex trafficking of minors in Florida and New York. He died in his jail cell on August 10, 2019. Barbara Sampson, the then-New York City medical examiner, ruled that his death was a suicide by hanging. The forensic pathologist Michael Baden disputed the ruling, and there has been significant public skepticism about the cause of his death, resulting in conspiracy theories.

Since Epstein's death precluded the possibility of pursuing criminal charges against him, a judge dismissed all criminal charges on August 29, 2019. Epstein had a decades-long association with socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, who recruited young girls for him, leading to her 2021 conviction on U.S. federal charges of sex trafficking and conspiracy for helping him procure girls, including a 14-year-old, for child sexual abuse and prostitution.

At the time of his death, Epstein's estate was valued at $600 million,

from which hundreds of millions have been paid to victims in legal settlements. Victims also received settlements of $290m from JP Morgan and $75m from Deutsche Bank, after lawsuits alleged they had enabled Epstein's abuse by keeping him as a client.[c]

Epstein was acquaintances or friends with public figures including Donald Trump, Bill Clinton, Elon Musk, Peter Thiel, Sergey Brin, Noam Chomsky, Steve Bannon, Ehud Barak, Richard Branson, Leon Black; former Prince Andrew, Duke of York; Bill Gates; Mette-Marit, Crown Princess of Norway, Thorbjørn Jagland, Les Wexner; and many others.[8] The Epstein files, a collection of documents which has been partially released as part of the Epstein Files Transparency Act, provide a public glimpse into the vast network he had cultivated over the late 20th and early 21st centuries.[9]

Early life



Epstein's childhood neighborhood of Sea Gate, Brooklyn

Jeffrey Edward Epstein was born on January 20, 1953, in Brooklyn,[10][11] a borough of New York City. His parents, Pauline "Paula" Stolofsky (1918–2004) and Seymour George Epstein (1916–1991), were Jewish and had married in 1952 shortly before his birth.[12] Pauline worked as a school aide and was a homemaker.[12][13][14] Seymour worked for the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation as a groundskeeper and gardener.[12][14]

Epstein was the older of two siblings; he and his brother Mark grew up in the neighborhood of Sea Gate,[15] a private gated community in Coney Island.[13] A childhood friend described Paula as "a wonderful mother and homemaker",[16] and neighbors remembered the parents as being quiet and humble.[13] Epstein attended local public schools, first attending Public School 188, and then Mark Twain Junior High School nearby and usually earned money by tutoring classmates. Acquaintances considered Epstein "sweet and generous" although "quiet and nerdy", and nicknamed him "Eppy". Of Epstein, a female

friend later said, "He was just an average boy, very smart in math, slightly overweight, freckles, always smiling."[13]

In 1967, Epstein attended the National Music Camp at the Interlochen Center for the Arts.[17] He began playing the piano when he was five, and was regarded as a talented musician by friends.[18] He graduated in 1969 from Lafayette High School at age 16, having skipped two grades.[12][19] Later that year, he attended advanced math classes at Cooper Union until he changed colleges in 1971.[12] From September 1971, he attended the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University, where he studied mathematical physiology, but left without receiving a degree in June 1974.[12][19]

Career

Dalton School (1974–1976)

In September 1974, at age 21, Epstein started working as a calculus and mathematics teacher at the Dalton School on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The school's newspaper announced the hiring of Epstein.[12][20] Donald Barr, who served as the headmaster until June 1974,[21][22][23] was known to have made several unconventional

recruitments at the time, although it is unclear whether he had a direct role in hiring Epstein.[20][24][25] Three months after Barr's departure, Epstein began to teach at the school, despite his lack of credentials.[25][20]

At Dalton, Epstein allegedly showed inappropriate behavior toward underage female students, paying them constant attention, and even showing up at a student party, according to a former student.[24] Other former students also often saw him flirting with female students. While at a Dalton parent-teacher conference, Epstein impressed a Wall Street executive with his knowledge of mathematics and was then recommended as a hire to Alan Greenberg, who was a senior partner of Bear Stearns.[19][22] In June 1976, Epstein was dismissed from Dalton for "poor performance" and he then became an assistant to a floor trader at Bear Stearns.[18][26][20][27][28]

Bear Stearns (1976–1981)



Epstein was *Cosmopolitan* magazine's "bachelor of the month" in the July 1980 issue

Epstein joined Bear Stearns in 1976 as a low-level junior assistant to a floor trader.[29] He swiftly moved up to become an options trader, working in the special products division, and then advised the bank's wealthiest clients on tax mitigation strategies.[19][30][31] James Cayne, the bank's later CEO, praised Epstein's skill with wealthy clients and complex products. In 1980, Epstein became a limited partner.[29] In 1981, Epstein was asked to leave for a "Reg D violation", according to his sworn testimony.[32][19][18] Epstein remained close to Cayne and Greenberg and was a client of Bear Stearns until its collapse in 2008.[29]

Financial troubleshooter (1981–1987)

In August 1981, Epstein founded his own consulting firm, Intercontinental Assets Group Inc. (IAG),[33] which assisted clients in recovering stolen money from fraudulent brokers and lawyers.[18] Epstein described his work at this time as being a high-level bounty hunter. He told friends that he worked sometimes as a consultant for governments and the very wealthy to recover embezzled funds, while at other times he worked for clients who had embezzled funds.[18][34] Spanish actress and heiress Ana Obregón was one such wealthy client, whom Epstein helped in 1982 to recover her father's millions in lost investments, which had disappeared when Drysdale Government Securities[35] collapsed because of fraud.[36]

In the mid-1980s, Epstein traveled multiple times between the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.[37][38] While in London, Epstein met Steven Hoffenberg. They had been introduced through Douglas Leese, a defense contractor, and John Mitchell, the former U.S. attorney general.[18] An anonymous source met with Epstein and Leese as early as 1981.[39] Hoffenberg said in 2020 that he had introduced Epstein to Robert Maxwell.[39]

During the 1980s, Epstein possessed an Austrian passport that had his photo, but with a false name. The passport showed his place of residence as Saudi Arabia.[37][38] In 2017, "a former senior White House official" reported that Alexander Acosta, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida who had handled Epstein's criminal case at the end of the George W. Bush administration, had stated to interviewers of President Donald Trump's first transition team, "I was told Epstein 'belonged to intelligence' and to 'leave it alone' ", and that Epstein was "above his pay grade".[40][41] During this period, one of Epstein's clients was the Saudi Arabian businessman Adnan Khashoggi,[42] who was the middleman in transferring American weapons from Israel to Iran as part of the Iran–Contra affair in the 1980s.[43] Khashoggi had been introduced to him by Leese.[39] Khashoggi was one of several defense contractors that he knew.[18][44]

Towers Financial Corporation (1987–1993)



Epstein shaking hands with President Bill Clinton at the White House, September 1993 (with Ghislaine Maxwell in the background on the right)

Steven Hoffenberg hired Epstein in 1987 as a consultant for Towers Financial Corporation,[45] a collection agency that bought debts people owed to hospitals, banks, and phone companies.[46][47] Hoffenberg set Epstein up in offices in the Villard Houses in Manhattan and paid him US$25,000 per month for his consulting work (equivalent to $71,000 in 2025).[18] Hoffenberg and Epstein then refashioned themselves as corporate raiders using Towers Financial as their raiding vessel. One of Epstein's first assignments was to attempt, unsuccessfully, to take over Pan American World Airways in 1987. A similar unsuccessful bid in 1988 was made to take over Emery Air Freight Corp. During this period, Hoffenberg and Epstein worked closely together and traveled everywhere on Hoffenberg's private jet.[18]

In 1993, Towers Financial Corporation imploded when it was exposed

as one of the biggest Ponzi schemes in American history, losing over US$450 million of its investors' money (equivalent to $1 billion in 2025).[18] In court documents, Hoffenberg claimed that Epstein was intimately involved in the scheme.[48][49] Epstein left the company by 1989 and was never charged for involvement in the massive investor fraud committed. It is unknown if Epstein acquired any stolen funds from the Towers Ponzi scheme.[18]

J. Epstein & Company (1988–2019)



Les Wexner's *Limitless* moored in Palma de Mallorca

In 1988, while Epstein was still consulting for Hoffenberg, he founded his financial management firm, J. Epstein & Company.[47][33]

According to Epstein, the company managed the assets of clients with more than US$1 billion in net worth, although others have expressed skepticism about that number, as he was secretive of the clients that he took.[19]

The only publicly known billionaire client of Epstein was Leslie Wexner, chairman and CEO of L Brands (formerly The Limited, Inc.) and Victoria's Secret.[18][50] In 1986, Epstein met Wexner through their mutual acquaintances, insurance executive Robert Meister and his wife, in Palm Beach. A year later, Epstein became Wexner's financial adviser and served as his right-hand man. Within the year, Epstein had sorted out Wexner's entangled finances.[19][51] In July 1991, Wexner granted Epstein full power of attorney over his affairs. The power of attorney allowed Epstein to hire people, sign checks, buy and sell properties, borrow money, and do anything else of a legally binding nature on Wexner's behalf.[52] Epstein managed Wexner's wealth and various projects such as the building of his yacht, the *Limitless*.[18] It was during this time that Southern Air Transport relocated its headquarters to service Wexner's brands,[53] and that Epstein dated models like Stacey Williams.[54] Epstein represented himself as a global talent scout for Victoria's Secret during this time and used this powerful position to sexually manipulate young women.[55][56]

By 1995, Epstein was a director of the Wexner Foundation and Wexner Heritage Foundation. He was also the president of Wexner's Property,

which developed part of the town of New Albany outside Columbus, Ohio, where Wexner lived. Epstein made millions in fees by managing Wexner's financial affairs. Epstein often attended Victoria's Secret fashion shows, and hosted the models at his New York City home, as well as helping aspiring models get work with the company.[51][52] In 1996, Epstein changed the name of his firm to the Financial Trust Company[19] and, for tax advantages, based it on the island of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands.[19] By relocating to the U.S. Virgin Islands, Epstein was able to reduce federal income taxes by 90 percent. The U.S. Virgin Islands acted as an offshore tax haven, while at the same time offering the advantages of being part of the U.S. banking system;[57] Epstein, who capitalized on his relation with Jes Staley while the latter was employed by JP Morgan,[58] maintained close relations with that bank's subsidiary in the USVI.[59][60][61]

In 2002, as reported by the *New York* magazine, his financial-administrative staff numbered 150 employees (among whom 20 accountants) across three sites: Villard House in Manhattan, the Wexner operation in Columbus, and St Thomas USVI.[19] Although it took 12 years to deliver the story, as Matthew Goldstein of the *New York Times* tells it, JP Morgan banker Jes Staley and CEO Jamie Dimon had a falling-out over Staley's client Epstein sometime around 2012, after the general counsel of the bank, Stephen Cutler, complained to Staley and others that Epstein was "not an honorable person in any way. He should not be a client."[62][63] Despite facing increased pressure from federal regulators, the bank did not discard

Epstein until 2013, coincidentally the year of Staley's departure from the bank. Epstein thereafter moved his trade to the American affiliate of Deutsche Bank.[63]

According to *Forbes* in 2025, Financial Trust Company (FTC) and Southern Trust Company, Epstein's two main businesses, received revenue of over $800 million between 1999 and 2018, consisting of $490 million in fees (most of that from two billionaires, Leslie Wexner, $200 million, and Leon Black, $170 million) and $310 million from investment returns. Due to the U.S. Virgin Islands' tax exemptions, his corporations saved $300 million in taxes and paid an effective tax rate of 4%, even though the top marginal tax rate was 38.5%.[64] In the course of his life, Epstein engaged with no fewer than 75 lawyers,[65] including Alan Dershowitz, Kenneth Starr, Roy Black and Jay Lefkowitz.[66] Senator Ron Wyden said in Congress that the U.S. Treasury Department file on Epstein detailed from one account no less than 4,725 wire transfers that totalled $1.1 billion, and that he had extensive financial correspondence from Russian banks over his sex trafficking activities.[67] Another report from *Forbes* says that between four banks (JPMorgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, Bank of New York Mellon and Bank of America) the transfers totalled more than $1.9 billion.[64]

Liquid Funding and the Bear Stearns explosion (2000–2008)

Epstein was the president of the Bermuda-incorporated company Liquid Funding Ltd. between 2000 and 2007.[68][69] The company was an early pioneer in expanding the kind of debt that could be accepted on repurchase, or the repo market, which involves a lender giving money to a borrower in exchange for securities that the borrower then agrees to buy back at an agreed-upon later time and price. The innovation of Liquid Funding, and other early companies, was that instead of having stocks and bonds as the underlying securities, it had commercial mortgages and investment-grade residential mortgages bundled into complex securities as the underlying security.[68] Liquid Funding was initially 40 percent owned by Bear Stearns.[68] Through the help of credit rating agencies—Standard & Poor's, Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investors Service—the new bundled securities were able to be created for companies so that they received a gold-plated AAA rating.[68] The implosion of complex securities, because of their inaccurate ratings, led to the collapse of Bear Stearns in March 2008 and set in motion the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent Great Recession. If Liquid Funding were left

holding large amounts of such securities as collateral, it could have lost large amounts of money.[68][70]

In August 2006, a month after the federal investigation of him began,[71] Epstein invested $57 million in the Bear Stearns High-Grade Structured Credit Strategies Enhanced Leverage hedge fund.[72][73] The SEC filings for the Bear Stearns fund show that Epstein's Financial Trust Company controlled the votes of a 10-percent share.[74] On April 18, 2007, an investor in the fund, who had $57 million invested, discussed redeeming his investment.[74][75] At this time, the fund had a leverage ratio of 17:1, which meant for every dollar invested there were 17 dollars of borrowed funds; therefore, the redemption of this investment would have been equivalent to removing $1 billion from the thinly traded CDO market.[76]

The selling of CDO assets to meet the redemptions that month began a repricing process and general freeze in the CDO market. The repricing of the CDO assets caused the collapse of the fund three months later in July, and the eventual collapse of Bear Stearns in March 2008. Losses to investors in the two Bear Stearns funds were estimated to exceed $1.6 billion.[73][75] By the time the Bear Stearns fund began to fail in May 2007, Epstein had begun to negotiate a plea deal with the U.S. Attorney's Office concerning imminent charges for sex with minors.[72][71] In August 2007, a month after the fund collapsed, Alexander Acosta (the U.S. attorney in Miami) entered into direct discussions about the plea agreement.[71] Acosta brokered a

lenient deal, according to him, because he had been ordered by higher government officials, who told him that Epstein was an individual of importance to the government.[40][41]

As part of the negotiations, the *Miami Herald* reported that Epstein provided "unspecified information" to the Florida federal prosecutors for a more lenient sentence and was supposedly "Unnamed investor #1" for the New York federal prosecutors in their unsuccessful June 2008 criminal case against Cioffi and Tannen, two of the managers of the failed Bear Stearns hedge fund.[77][72] Alan Dershowitz, one of Epstein's attorneys in the 2008 criminal case, told Fox Business Network in 2019, "We would have been touting that if he had [cooperated]. The idea that Epstein helped in any prosecution is news to me."[78] Moody's reported that on April 18, 2008 "all outstanding rated liabilities" of Liquid Funding were "paid in full". At the time, the liquidator had not yet sold the beleaguered fund to its new owner as of May 1: JP Morgan.[79]

Epstein & Zuckerman (2003–2004)

In 2003, *New York Daily News* publisher Mortimer Zuckerman partnered with Epstein, advertising executive Donny Deutsch, and investor Nelson Peltz in a bid to acquire *New York* magazine.[80] The

ultimate buyer was Bruce Wasserstein, a longtime Wall Street investment banker, who paid US$55 million, over US$10 million above the offer from Zuckerman, Epstein, Deutsch, and Peltz.[80] In 2004, Epstein and Zuckerman committed up to US$25 million to finance *Radar*, a celebrity and pop culture magazine founded by Maer Roshan. Epstein and Zuckerman were equal partners in the venture. Roshan, as its editor-in-chief, retained a small ownership stake. It folded after three issues as a print publication and became exclusively an online one.[81]

Zwirn (2002–2008)

Between 2002 and 2005, Epstein invested $80 million in the D.B. Zwirn Special Opportunities Fund, a hedge fund that invested in illiquid debt securities.[72][82] In November 2006, Epstein attempted to redeem his investment after he was informed of accounting irregularities in the fund.[83] By this time, his investment had grown to $140 million. The D.B. Zwirn fund refused to redeem the illiquid investment.[72] The fund was closed in 2008, and its remaining assets of approximately $2 billion, including Epstein's investment, were transferred to Fortress Investment Group when that firm bought the assets in 2009.[72][82] Epstein later went to arbitration with Fortress over his redemption attempt. The outcome of that arbitration is not publicly known.[72]

Epstein and Barak: Carbyne (2014–2019)

After his first arrest, Epstein began an interest in the surveillance industry.[84] Epstein maintained a close relationship with former Israeli prime minister and defense minister Ehud Barak,[85] exchanging private emails with him and meeting more than 30 times between 2013 and 2017.[86][87] He also facilitated Barak's interactions with prominent figures, including Peter Thiel, as well as Sergey Belyakov and Viktor Vekselberg, who were connected to Vladimir Putin's circle.[84] These interactions are documented in the leaked Barak–Epstein emails released by the Handala hacker group,[84] whose authenticity has been partially corroborated by independent reporting, including *The Sunday Times*.[88]

In business, Epstein leveraged his relationship with Barak to get access to Thiel.[84] In 2015, Epstein invested in Reporty Homeland Security (later rebranded as Carbyne), a startup headed by Barak which developed advanced emergency communication technologies.[89][90][91] The company's leadership included CEO Amir Elihai, a former special forces officer, and director Pinchas Bukhris, a former defense ministry director general and commander of the IDF cyber unit 8200.[92][93] In many years, Epstein's acquaintances had repeatedly encouraged Thiel to meet him. Reid Hoffman, Thiel's friend

from the PayPal Mafia, directly introduced the two and joined some meetings.[94]

Epstein pitched Reporty to Thiel-founded Valar Ventures in 2016; although the firm declined, Valar partner Andrew McCormack indicated they might revisit the venture once the company matured.[84] Epstein had previously invested US$40 million into funds managed by Valar in 2015 and 2016.[95] In 2018, another Thiel co-founded firm, Founders Fund, participated in Carbyne's $15 million Series B funding round (non-leading role).[96][84] Between 2014 and 2016, Thiel had half a dozen scheduled meetings with Epstein at his townhouse, including with other people such as Woody Allen and Kathryn Ruemmler.[94] There is no record of Thiel's social visits to one of Epstein's homes or flights on his private jet.[97]

Other businesses

Epstein participated in funding rounds for the crypto ventures Coinbase and Blockstream, giving the former $3 million and the latter $500,000 in 2014. Epstein's donation to Coinbase was brokered by Brock Pierce, the co-founder of Tether, while his donation to Blockstream was brokered by Joichi Ito, who was the director of MIT's Media Lab at the time.[98] Barak discussed with Epstein in the leaked Barak–Epstein emails about meeting Putin's ally Viktor Vekselberg on the June 6 and 8, 2014. An email sent in April 2015 showed that Barak

had asked Epstein for his opinion on Vekselberg-backed Fifth Dimension, a startup which would later be shut down after being sanctioned in 2018 by the United States for alleged election interference.[84] In August 2018, Epstein said in a *New York Times* interview that he was helping Elon Musk find a new chairman for Tesla after Musk was in trouble with the SEC over comments that he would privatize the car manufacturer.[99]

Geopolitical activities (2012–2019)

Ivory Coast security agreement

Between 2012 and 2014, Epstein assisted Ehud Barak in what began as a private business initiative involving internal security-related projects in Ivory Coast, according to documents released by the U.S. House Oversight Committee from Epstein's files and leaked emails from Barak.[100][101] Epstein played an operational role in advancing the effort: he coordinated Barak's meetings during the United Nations General Assembly, connected him with Ivory Coast President

Alassane Ouattara's chief of staff and other officials, and helped arrange connections with the president's family.[101] Barak, meanwhile, commissioned former Israeli intelligence officers to produce technical plans for nationwide phone and internet monitoring.[100] The private initiative later was the basis of a 2014 defense and internal-security agreement between Israel and Ivory Coast.[101]

Mongolia security initiative

Epstein performed similar facilitation work as in Ivory Coast for Barak in Mongolia.[102][103] He assisted in the promotion of Israeli surveillance technology for the Mongolian government.[102] During this period, the Israeli intelligence officer Yoni Koren (a longtime associate and former aide to Barak) stayed multiple times at Epstein's Manhattan residence, including while serving in Barak's office in 2013 and again during extended visits in 2014 and 2015.[104][105]

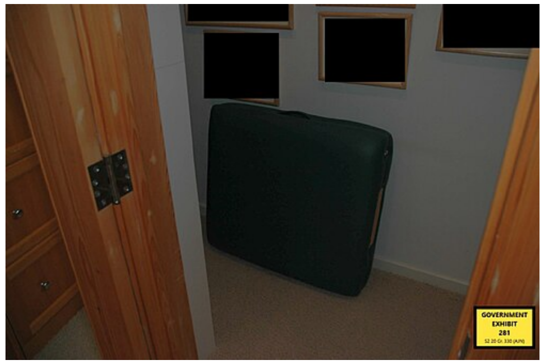
Legal issues

Farmer reported that Epstein had groped her and her 16-year-old sister to the New York City Police Department and the FBI in 1996, but the report was not investigated further.[106] In 2001 or 2002, while

living in Palm Beach, Epstein donated $50,000 to the Palm Beach Police Scholarship Fund, which pays scholarships for police officers' children. On October 16, 2003, he donated $36,000 to the Town of Palm Beach. This was before the local police department began investigating the accusations that led to his first criminal case.[107]

First criminal case (2005–2011)

Initial developments (2005–2006)



Foldable massage table in Epstein's Palm Beach mansion in 2005

According to *The Washington Post*, Palm Beach police were tipped off in November 2004 about young women coming and going from Epstein's home.[108] Epstein donated $90,000 to the police department on December 14.[107] In March 2005, a woman contacted Florida's Palm Beach Police Department and alleged that her 14-year-old stepdaughter had been taken to Epstein's mansion by an older girl. While there, she was allegedly paid $300 to strip and massage Epstein.[109] She had allegedly undressed, but left the encounter wearing her underwear.[110] Palm Beach Police began a 13-month undercover investigation of Epstein, including a search of his Palm Beach home.[71][111][112] Former Palm Beach Police Chief Michael Reiter spoke to the FBI in 2019, and the FBI documented the information as follows:

> *The case started to grow rapidly. [Redacted] experience inside the house was then*

> *corroborated. More surveillance was done on EPSTEIN's house. Some kids were observed, prepubescent with braces and backpacks coming from school. Aviation personnel spoke with PBPD about who was coming and going. One employee said there were dozens of girls in one day. The PBPD then put together a case and brought it to the State's Attorney's office.*[113]

During the investigation, Reiter publicly accused the Palm Beach County state prosecutor, Barry Krischer, of being too lenient and called for help from the FBI.[109] The FBI then became involved. Subsequently, the police alleged that Epstein had paid several girls to perform sexual acts with him.[114] Interviews with five alleged victims and seventeen witnesses under oath, a high-school transcript and other items found in Epstein's trash and home allegedly showed that some of the girls involved were under 18, the youngest being 14, with many under 16.[115][116] The police search of Epstein's home found two hidden cameras and large numbers of photos of girls throughout the house, some of whom the police had interviewed in the course of their investigation.[110] Adriana Ross, a former model from Poland who became an Epstein assistant, reportedly removed computer drives and other electronic equipment from the financier's Florida mansion before Palm Beach Police searched the home.[117] A search of

Epstein's residence by Palm Beach Police detective Joseph Recarey in 2005 uncovered an incriminating Amazon receipt containing books on sadomasochism.[118]



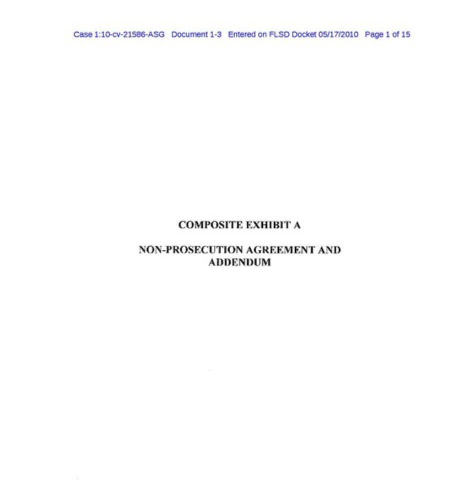
In Palm Beach police affidavits, women reported Epstein occasionally used a vibrator during assaults.[119]

A former employee told the police that Epstein would receive massages three times a day.[110] Eventually the FBI compiled reports on "34 confirmed minors" eligible for restitution (increased to 40 in the non-prosecution agreement) whose allegations of sexual abuse by Epstein included corroborating details.[120]

In May 2006, Palm Beach police filed a probable cause affidavit saying

that Epstein should be charged with four counts of unlawful sex with minors and one count of sexual abuse.[110][121] On July 27, 2006, Epstein was arrested by the Palm Beach Police Department on state felony charges of procuring a minor for prostitution and solicitation of a prostitute. He was booked at the Palm Beach County jail and later released on a $3,000 bond.[122][123][124] State prosecutor Krischer later convened a Palm Beach County grand jury, which was usually only done in capital cases. A grand jury returned a single charge of felony solicitation of prostitution,[125] to which Epstein pleaded not guilty in August 2006.[126] Epstein's defense lawyers included Roy Black, Gerald Lefcourt, Harvard Law School professor Alan Dershowitz, and former U.S. solicitor general Ken Starr.[109][127] Linguist Steven Pinker also assisted.[128]

Non-prosecution agreement (NPA) (2006–2008)


Case 1:10-cv-21586-ASG Document 1-3 Entered on FLSD Docket 05/17/2010 Page 1 of 15

COMPOSITE EXHIBIT A

NON-PROSECUTION AGREEMENT AND ADDENDUM

Epstein's October 2007 non-prosecution agreement

In July 2006, the FBI began its own investigation of Epstein, nicknamed "Operation Leap Year".[71] Epstein's lawyers met with federal prosecutors, asking them to end the federal investigation so Epstein could instead face a single Florida charge of solicitation of a prostitute.[129] The federal investigation continued nonetheless.

Before Epstein's court appearance on May 15, 2007, federal prosecutor Marie Villafaña drafted a 53-page, 60-count indictment[71] and an 82-page memo for her supervisors, who included Alexander Acosta, the then attorney for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida; Jeffrey Sloman, then the First Assistant U.S. Attorney; and Matthew Menchel, then the chief of the Miami criminal division.[129] However, throughout the spring and summer, Menchel repeatedly told Villafaña that Acosta was not ready to go forward with the indictment.[130] Private emails were used to communicate with

defense lawyers which indicated that Villafana and other prosecutors sought to have in-person or phone conversations with defense counsel.[131] According to reporting in *Politico* two women served as lead prosecutors beginning in 2006 when Epstein first faced charges and were "closely involved in crafting his federal non-prosecution agreement, plea deal and lenient sentence."[132] The only woman defense attorney, Lilly Sanchez, was a former dating interest of the lead federal prosecutor, Matthew Menchel, who failed to inform his superiors and after he left federal service had several meetings with Epstein to discuss taking on legal work.[133]

Acosta agreed to a plea deal, which Alan Dershowitz helped to negotiate,[134] to grant immunity from all federal criminal charges to Epstein, along with four named co-conspirators and any unnamed "potential co-conspirators".[77] According to the *Miami Herald*, the non-prosecution agreement "essentially shut down an ongoing FBI probe into whether there were more victims and other powerful people who took part in Epstein's sex crimes."[77] At the time, this halted the investigation and sealed the indictment.[77] The *Miami Herald* said: "Acosta agreed, despite a federal law to the contrary, that the deal would be kept from the victims."[77]

The plea deal was subsequently described as a "sweetheart deal".[135] Acosta later said he offered a lenient plea deal because he was told that Epstein "belonged to intelligence" was "above his pay grade" and to "leave it alone".[40][41][136] On June 30, 2008, in the 15th

Judicial Circuit in Palm Beach County, Epstein pled guilty to one count of "Felony Solicitation of Prostitution" and one count of "Procuring Person under 18 for Prostitution." He was sentenced to 18 months in prison and officially registered as a Sexual Offender.[137] Also as part of the deal he was required to pay restitution to three dozen victims identified by the FBI.[77][114]

External videos

"Documentary: Who is Jeffrey Epstein, accused of sexually abusing teen girls?" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jDPzW9COsU). *Miami Herald* via YouTube. November 29, 2018.

A federal judge later found that the prosecutors had violated victims' rights by concealing the agreement from the victims and instead urging them to have "patience".[138][139] According to an internal review conducted by the Department of Justice's Office of

Professional Responsibility, released in November 2020, Acosta showed "poor judgment" in granting Epstein a non-prosecution agreement and failing to notify Epstein's alleged victims about the agreement.[140]

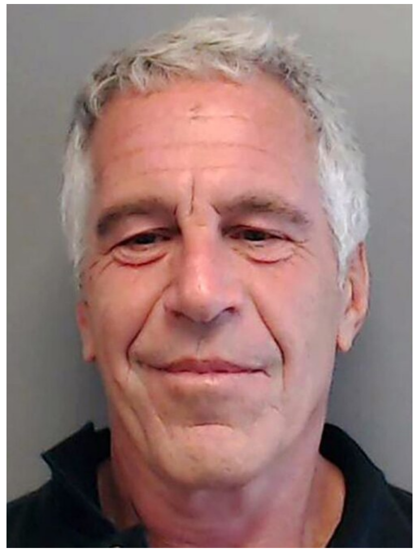
In 2019, Judge Kenneth Marra for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida adjudicated that the Acosta NPA document had violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act.[141][66] A later Appeals court judgment called the Acosta NPA "a national disgrace".[141] The terms of the Acosta NPA were revealed only after Bradley Edwards, the representative of two of Epstein's teenaged victims, and press lawyers successfully sued to make them public.[66]

Conviction and sentencing (2008–2011)

On June 30, 2008, after Epstein pleaded guilty to a state charge of procuring for prostitution a girl below age 18, he was sentenced to eighteen months in prison. While most convicted sex offenders in Florida are sent to state prison, Epstein was instead housed in a private wing of the Palm Beach County Stockade and, according to the sheriff's office, was, after 3½ months, allowed to leave the jail on "work release" for up to twelve hours a day, six days a week. This contravened the sheriff's own policies requiring a maximum remaining

sentence of ten months and making sex offenders ineligible for the privilege. He was allowed to come and go outside of specified release hours.[142]

Epstein's cell door was left unlocked, and he had access to the attorney room where a television was installed for him, before he was moved to the Stockade's previously unstaffed infirmary. He worked at the office of the Florida Science Foundation, a foundation he had created shortly before reporting to jail; he dissolved it after serving his time. The Sheriff's Office received $128,000 from Epstein's non-profit to cover the costs of additional services provided during his work release. His office was monitored by "permit deputies" whose overtime was paid by Epstein.[107] They were required to wear suits and check in "welcomed guests" at the "front desk". Later, the Sheriff's Office said these guest logs were destroyed per the department's "records retention" rules, although the Stockade visitor logs were not.[143] Epstein was allowed to use his own driver to drive him between jail and his office and other appointments.[142][143]



Epstein pictured in 2013, photographed for the sex offender registry

Epstein served 13 months of his 18-month sentence before being released on July 22, 2009, and placed on a year of probation on house arrest until August 2010.[144][145][146][147] His early release after 13 of 18 months served was because he provided information regarding Bear Stearns executives Ralph Cioffi and Matthew Tannin,[148] whose conduct was scrutinized by the SDNY court in *In re Bear Stearns Companies, Inc. Securities, Derivative and ERISA Litigation*, before the bank was acquired by JPMorgan Chase.[149]

While on probation, he was allowed numerous trips on his corporate jet to his residences in Manhattan and the U.S. Virgin Islands. He was allowed long shopping trips and walks around Palm Beach "for exercise".[142] After a contested hearing in January 2011, and an appeal, he stayed registered in New York State as a "level three" (high

risk of repeat offense) sex offender, a lifelong designation.[150] At that hearing, the Manhattan assistant district attorney, Jennifer Gaffney, argued unsuccessfully that the level should be reduced to a low-risk "level one" and was chided by the judge.[151]

Reactions

After the accusations against Epstein became public, several persons and institutions returned donations that they had received from him, including Eliot Spitzer, Bill Richardson,[152] and the Palm Beach Police Department.[116] Harvard University announced it would not return any money.[152] Various charitable donations that Epstein had made to finance children's education were also questioned.[153]

The immunity agreement and Epstein's lenient treatment were the subject of ongoing public dispute. The Palm Beach police chief accused the state of giving him preferential treatment,[109] and the *Miami Herald* said U.S. attorney Acosta gave Epstein "the deal of a lifetime".[77] Following Epstein's arrest in July 2019, on sex trafficking charges, Acosta resigned as Secretary of Labor effective July 19, 2019.[154]

Matthew Menchel, the chief criminal prosecutor at the Miami U.S. Attorney's office who was behind the plea deal, later maintained a personal relationship with Epstein. Menchel had apparently personal

meetings with Epstein in 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2017.[155][156][157][158][159][160][161]

Interim developments and media scrutiny

On June 18, 2010, Epstein's former house manager, Alfredo Rodriguez, was sentenced to 18 months' incarceration after being convicted on an obstruction charge for failing to turn over to police, and subsequently trying to sell, a journal in which he had recorded Epstein's activities. FBI special agent Christina Pryor reviewed the material and agreed it was information "that would have been extremely useful in investigating and prosecuting the case, including names and contact information of material witnesses and additional victims."[162][163]

Virginia Giuffre was among the first of Epstein's accusers to reveal her identity to the public, having done so in 2011.[164][165]

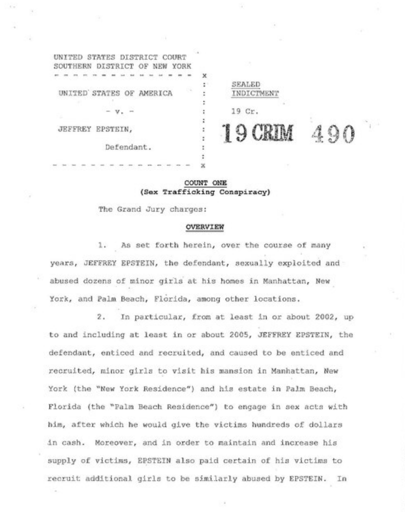
Miami Herald article

In 2018, Julie Brown published an exposé in the *Miami Herald*, after she identified 80 victims and located about 60 of them.[77][71][142] She quotes the then police chief Reiter as saying "This was 50-something 'shes' and one 'he'—and the 'shes' all basically told the same story."[77] Brown argues that Epstein had not faced justice due to a "sweetheart deal" arrangement. Details from the investigation included Virginia Giuffre's allegation that 12-year-old triplets were flown in from France for Epstein's birthday, and flown back the following day after being sexually abused by the financier. It was alleged that young girls were recruited from Brazil and other South American countries, former Soviet countries, and Europe, and that Jean-Luc Brunel's "MC2" modeling agency was also supplying girls to Epstein,[115][166][167] who actually financed the French agency.[168]

Brown's article prompted interest among New York authorities to reopen investigations into Epstein. U.S. Manhattan attorney Geoffrey Berman, stated "our investigation was assisted by some excellent investigative journalism."[169]

Second set of criminal charges (2019)

Sex trafficking charges


UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- v. -

JEFFREY EPSTEIN,

Defendant.

SEALED INDICTMENT

19 Cr.

19 CRIM 490

COUNT ONE
(Sex Trafficking Conspiracy)

The Grand Jury charges:

OVERVIEW

1. As set forth herein, over the course of many years, JEFFREY EPSTEIN, the defendant, sexually exploited and abused dozens of minor girls at his homes in Manhattan, New York, and Palm Beach, Florida, among other locations.

2. In particular, from at least in or about 2002, up to and including at least in or about 2005, JEFFREY EPSTEIN, the defendant, enticed and recruited, and caused to be enticed and recruited, minor girls to visit his mansion in Manhattan, New York (the "New York Residence") and his estate in Palm Beach, Florida (the "Palm Beach Residence") to engage in sex acts with him, after which he would give the victims hundreds of dollars in cash. Moreover, and in order to maintain and increase his supply of victims, EPSTEIN also paid certain of his victims to recruit additional girls to be similarly abused by EPSTEIN. In

U.S. v. Jeffrey Epstein indictment[170]

On July 6, 2019, Epstein was arrested when he returned to the U.S. from France by the FBI-NYPD Crimes Against Children Task Force at Teterboro Airport in New Jersey on charges of sex trafficking during the years 2002 to 2005.[14][171] He was jailed at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York City.[172]

Investigators seized Epstein's devices at his homes in New York, Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands.[173] They found CDs, photographs and a videotape containing nude images of females, some who "seemed as if they might be minors".[173]

According to a memo published 4 days after his arrest, the search of his New York townhouse turned up evidence of sex trafficking and "hundreds—and perhaps thousands—of sexually suggestive photographs of fully—or partially—nude females." In a locked safe, discs were found with labels: "Young [Name] + [Name]", "Misc nudes 1", and "Girl pics nude". *USA Today* noted that although investigators were still reviewing the material, one attorney said that his client was underage when some photos were taken.[174]

FBI investigators later determined that one device contained between 15 and 20 images depicting child sexual abuse material (CSAM), but that the material had been downloaded from the internet, and not produced by Epstein himself.[173] According to a memo later sent to the FBI by U.S. Attorney Maurene Comey, "No videos or photos showed Epstein victims being sexually abused, none showed any males with any of the nude females, and none contained evidence implicating anyone other than Epstein and Maxwell". Comey stated they “would have pursued any leads" generated but “we did not, however, locate any such videos".[173]

Massage room with a massage table in Epstein's NYC townhouse in 2019

Also found in the safe were $70,000 in cash, 48 diamonds,[175] and a fraudulent Austrian passport, which expired in 1987, that had Epstein's photo but another name. The passport had numerous entrance and exit stamps, including entrance stamps that showed the use of the passport to enter France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia in the 1980s. The passport showed his place of residence as Saudi Arabia.[37][38] According to his attorneys, Epstein had been advised to acquire the passport because "as an affluent member of the Jewish faith", he was in danger of being kidnapped while traveling abroad.[176]

On July 8, prosecutors with the Public Corruption Unit of the Southern District of New York under Geoffrey Berman charged him with sex trafficking and conspiracy to traffic minors for sex. The grand jury indictment alleges that "dozens" of underage girls were brought into Epstein's mansions for sexual encounters.[177][178][179] Judge Kenneth Marra was to decide whether the non-prosecution agreement that

protected Epstein from the more serious charges should still stand.[180]

Federal paperwork regarding Epstein being denied bail

Epstein requested to be released on bond, offering to post $100 million with the condition that he would also submit to house arrest in his New York City mansion.[181] U.S. district judge Richard M. Berman denied the request on July 18, saying that Epstein posed a danger to the public and a serious flight risk to avoid prosecution.[181] On August 29, 2019, 19 days after Epstein was found dead in his jail cell, the case against Epstein was closed by Judge Berman.[182][183] Prosecutors stated they would continue an investigation for potential co-conspirators.[183]

Investigation in France

On August 23, 2019, the prosecutor's office in Paris, France, opened a preliminary investigation into Epstein, after Yael Mellul wrote to the Paris prosecutor to report of an alleged international pedophile network involving Epstein, who criticized the pace of the authorities.[184] The preliminary investigation aimed to identify victims of rape and sexual assault of minors under and over the age of 15, criminal association with a view to committing crimes, and association with criminals with a view to committing offenses. Prosecutors aimed to find possible crimes committed in France and elsewhere against French citizens.[185] An associate of Epstein, modeling agent Jean-Luc Brunel, was arrested during this investigation, but was found dead in his jail cell in 2022.[186]

Birthday book release

In September 2025, the House Oversight Committee released a 2003 birthday album created for Epstein's 50th birthday, titled *The First Fifty Years*. The album contained letters and drawings from various associates.[187] One letter in the collection was attributed to Donald

Trump, although Trump has denied writing or signing it and his legal team has challenged its authenticity.[188][189] Media coverage noted that the release drew renewed attention to Epstein's political and social connections.[190]

Civil cases

In October 2007, transgender model Ava Cordero alleged that Epstein had abused her and filed suit accordingly;[191][192] however, it was dismissed, with press at the time instead making allegations about Cordero's mental health and mocking her gender identity.[191][192]

Alleged blackmail recordings

In 2015, Virginia Giuffre alleged that Epstein took a video of her in the early 2000s being sexually abused by "powerful men" for blackmail purposes.[193]

In 2016, Sarah Ransome claimed that she made copies of tapes filmed by Epstein for blackmail purposes in the early 2000s, which featured Donald Trump, Bill Clinton, Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor and Richard Branson raping an underage girl. However, Ransome admitted she fabricated the claim in 2019.[194][195]

These allegations generated media interest following Epstein's death. In August 2019, *Vanity Fair* reported the claim of an anonymous source, who said that Ghislaine Maxwell said that Epstein had his island "completely wired" with cameras; with the source speculating this was for blackmail purposes.[196] In November 2019, Maria Farmer, an artist who worked for Epstein in 1996, claimed that Epstein had shown her a hidden room in his New York mansion where he had men monitoring rooms in the home with "pinhole cameras" in the bedrooms and toilets.[197] In 2019, a *New York Times* reporter said that in 2018 Epstein had told him that he had "dirt" on some powerful figures on their sexual proclivities and drug use.[99] In July 2021, anonymous sources told *Rolling Stone* that Epstein had made "secret recordings" of influential people as a means to compromise them.[39]

In 2019, the FBI seized Epstein's devices during raids on his homes in New York, Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands.[173] Authorities reportedly found CDs, photographs and a tapes, some labelled "young [name] + [name]", and depicting girls who "seemed as if they might be minors".[173] The later FBI analysis (made public in 2026) found between 15 and 20 images depicting child sexual abuse

material (CSAM), but investigators determined that these were downloaded from the internet, not produced by Epstein.[173] According to a declassified memo later sent to the FBI by U.S. Attorney Maurene Comey, "no videos or photos showed Epstein victims being sexually abused, none showed any males with any of the nude females, and none contained evidence implicating anyone other than Epstein and Maxwell".[173]

According to 2019 FBI investigation findings, investigators corroborated witness stories of abuse by Epstein; but witnesses did not corroborate Giuffre's allegation that Epstein "lent out" girls out to a "ring" of powerful men. Giuffre also gave investigators the names of two other women, who she said Epstein had lent out, but both women denied having these experiences.[173]

Document disclosures and investigative reporting

Investigative reporting has raised questions about the handling of allegations against Jeffrey Epstein by U.S. law enforcement

authorities. Reporting by *The Guardian* cited records and interviews suggesting that federal authorities had information about allegations against Epstein years before his later prosecutions, prompting criticism over missed opportunities to intervene.[198]

Published documents and victim testimony have also indicated that complaints about Epstein dated back decades, with some allegations reportedly not pursued at the time.[199]

Additional reporting has highlighted accounts from early accusers, including claims that warnings about Epstein were raised years before major criminal proceedings began.[200]

Materials released through court proceedings and document disclosures by the United States Department of Justice have drawn renewed public attention to the scope of Epstein's activities and his associations with prominent public figures. Media coverage has emphasized that the appearance of individuals in legal documents does not in itself imply wrongdoing.[201][202]

Personal life

In 2003, *Bloomberg* journalist David Bank spoke on Little St. James

with Epstein in a 5-hour long interview, which Bank left unpublished prior to Epstein's death.[203][204][205] In 2017, Epstein spoke in interviews, over the course of more than one hundred hours, with journalist Michael Wolff, which began to be released in November 2024, as part of Wolff's *Fire and Fury* podcast.[206][207][208]

Death

At the time of his death, Epstein was being held at the Metropolitan Correctional Center, awaiting trial for sex trafficking.[209]

On July 23, 2019, Epstein was found injured and semiconscious at 1:30 a.m. on the floor of his cell, with marks around his neck.[210][211][212][213][214] His cellmate, former New York City police officer Nicholas Tartaglione, who was awaiting trial for four counts of murder,

was questioned about Epstein's condition. He denied having any knowledge of what happened. Correctional staff suspected attempted suicide, but did not rule out the possibility it was staged or that he was assaulted by another inmate.[209][215][175][216][211] According to NBC News, two sources said that Epstein might have tried to hang himself, a third said the injuries were not serious and could have been staged, and a fourth source said that an assault by his cellmate had not been ruled out.[209] After that incident, he was placed on suicide watch.[210][217][218][219] Six days later, on July 29, 2019, Epstein was taken off suicide watch and placed in a special housing unit with another inmate.[210] Epstein's close associates said he was in "good spirits".[220]

When Epstein was placed in the special housing unit, the jail informed the Justice Department that he would have a cellmate, and that a guard would look into the cell every 30 minutes. These procedures were not followed on the night of his death.[221][210][222] On August 9, 2019, Epstein's cellmate was transferred out, but no one took his place.[223] Later in the evening, contrary to the jail's normal procedure, Epstein was not checked every 30 minutes.[221][210][222] The two guards who were assigned to check his jail unit that night fell asleep and did not check on him for about three hours; the guards falsified related records.[210][224] The two cameras in front of Epstein's cell were also claimed to have malfunctioned that night.[225]

Epstein was found dead in his cell at the Metropolitan Correctional

Center (MCC) in New York City at 6:30 a.m. EDT on August 10, 2019.[226][227] The Bureau of Prisons said lifesaving measures were initiated immediately upon the discovery of Epstein's body. Emergency responders were called and he was taken to a hospital. On August 10, 2019, the Bureau of Prisons and U.S. attorney general William Barr called the death an apparent suicide, although no final determination had been made.[220] The U.S. Department of Justice's Inspector General's investigation report released on June 27, 2023, criticized jail officials for repeated "negligence, misconduct, and outright job performance failures" in connection with Epstein's incarceration and death. It also denied the suggestion that what happened was anything other than a suicide.[228] In May 2025, the FBI announced plans to release surveillance footage from the night of Epstein's death, aiming to address ongoing conspiracy theories. Deputy Director Dan Bongino stated that the video clearly shows Epstein alone in his cell, with no evidence of outside involvement, reaffirming the official ruling of suicide.[229]

Autopsy



Epstein's body moved from New York hospital to medical examiner's office

On August 11, 2019, an autopsy was performed.[230] It appeared likely that Epstein had thrown himself violently off the cell's top bunk, which would explain the damage he suffered, other than strangulation.[231] The preliminary result of the autopsy found that Epstein sustained multiple breaks in his neck bones. Among the bones broken in Epstein's neck was the hyoid bone. Such breaks of the hyoid bone can occur from those who hang themselves from some substantial height, e.g. jumping from a chair into the rope, but they are more common in victims of homicide by strangulation. A 2010 study found broken hyoids in 25 percent of cases of hangings. A larger study conducted from 2010 to 2016 found hyoid damage in just 16 of 264, or six percent, of cases of hangings. Hyoid bone breaks become more common with age, as the bones become more brittle.[232] Forensic pathologist Cyril Wecht noted that hanging by leaning forward would not result in broken cervical bones.[233]

On August 16, 2019, Barbara Sampson, the New York City medical examiner, ruled Epstein's death a suicide by hanging.[234] The

medical examiner, according to Epstein's defense counsel, only saw nine minutes of footage from one security camera to help her arrive at her conclusion.[235] Epstein's defense lawyers were not satisfied with the conclusion of the medical examiner and were conducting their own independent investigation into the cause of Epstein's death, including taking legal action, if necessary, to view the pivotal camera footage near his cell during the night of his death.[236] Epstein's lawyers said that the evidence concerning Epstein's death was "far more consistent" with murder than suicide.[235] Michael Baden, an independent pathologist hired by the Epstein estate, observed the autopsy. In October 2019, Baden said that Epstein had experienced a number of injuries—among them a broken bone in his neck—that "are extremely unusual in suicidal hangings and could occur much more commonly in homicidal strangulation." Baden stated that he thinks that the evidence points to homicide rather than suicide.[237]

Final will

On August 18, 2019, it was reported that Epstein had signed his last will and testament on August 8, 2019, two weeks after being found injured in his cell and two days before his death.[209] Until this time, Epstein had been depositing money in other inmates' commissary

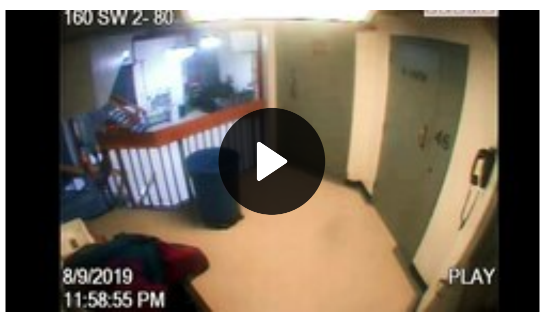
accounts to avoid being attacked.[210] Epstein's will provided 50 million in cash and most of his property to girlfriend Karyna Shuliak, 50 million to longtime lawyer Darren Indyke, 25 million to accountant Richard Kahn, 10 million to pilot Larry Visoski, 10 million to Ghislaine Maxwell, and 10 million to his brother Mark. Other female employees were to get over a million each.[238] The trust's enforceability remained uncertain.[239][240] As of February 2026, Kahn and Indyke control Epstein's estate.[241]

Burial

Following the autopsy, Epstein's body was claimed by his brother Mark.[242][243] On September 5, 2019, Epstein's body was interred in an unmarked crypt next to those of his parents at the I.J. Morris Star of David Cemetery in Palm Beach, Florida. The names of his parents were also removed from their crypt in order to prevent vandalism.[244]

Investigations

Attorney General Barr ordered an investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General in addition to the investigation by the FBI, saying he was "appalled" by Epstein's death in federal custody.[220][245] Two days later Barr said there had been "serious irregularities" in the prison's handling of Epstein, promising: "We will get to the bottom of what happened, and there will be accountability."[246] On August 14, 2019, federal court judge Richard M. Berman, who was overseeing Epstein's criminal case, wrote to the Metropolitan Correctional Center inquiring as to whether an investigation into the apparent suicide would include a probe into Epstein's prior (July 23) injuries. Berman wrote that it has never been explained what they concluded about the incident.[247]



CCTV footage released in July 2025 showing part of a common area within the Metropolitan Correctional Center where Epstein was being held. A minute is missing from the footage, where the clock jumps from 11:58:58 to 12:00:00.

The president of the Council of Prison Locals C-33 E. Young, stated

that prisons "can't ever stop anyone who is persistent on killing themselves."[248] One hundred twenty four inmates killed themselves while in federal custody between 2010 and 2016, i.e. 20 per year, out of an inmate population of 180,000 (0.06%).[249][250] The previous inmate suicide in that MCC facility was in 1998.[251] Union leader Young said it was unclear if there was video of Epstein's hanging or direct observations by jail officials. He said that while cameras are ubiquitous, he did not believe the interior of inmates' cells was within their range. Young said union officials had raised concerns regarding staffing, as the Trump administration had imposed a hiring freeze and budget cuts on the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), adding: "All this was caused by the administration."[248]



President Trump and Attorney General Pam Bondi briefly mentioning Epstein during a cabinet meeting on July 8, 2025.

President Serene Gregg of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 3148 said MCC was functioning with 70 percent of the needed correctional officers, forcing many to work 60-to-70-hour

workweeks.[248][252] In previous congressional testimony, Attorney General Barr admitted the BOP was "short" about 4,000 employees. He had lifted the freeze and was recruiting officers to replace those who had departed.[248]

Epstein's attorneys asked Berman to probe the death, alleging they could provide evidence the incident resulting in his death was "far more consistent with assault" than suicide.[235] One week after having signed his final will, it had been reported that at least one camera in the hallway outside Epstein's cell had footage that was unusable, although other usable footage was recorded in the area.[215] Two cameras that malfunctioned in front of Epstein's cell were sent to an FBI lab for examination.[225] Federal prosecutors subpoenaed 20 correctional officers concerning the cause of Epstein's death.[253]

On November 19, federal prosecutors charged MCC guards Michael Thomas and Tova Noel with creating false records, and conspiracy, after video footage obtained by prosecutors revealed that Epstein had, against regulation, been in his cell unchecked for eight hours prior to being found dead.[254][255][256] On May 22, 2021, the guards admitted they falsified records but were spared time behind bars under a deal.[257] As part of a deferred prosecution agreement, on May 25, they plead guilty to falsifying records and conspiracy to defraud the U.S. They were sentenced to six months supervisory release and 100 hours of community service.[258] On December 19, 2023, judge Loretta Preska ordered a list with names of 170 Epstein

associates to be unsealed on January 1, 2024.[259] Anyone on the list had until January 1 to appeal to have their name removed.[260][261][262][263][264] Senator Ben Sasse of Nebraska responded to these inconsequential terms as "unacceptable" and said, "One hundred hours of community service is a joke — this isn't traffic court."[265]

In February 2025, the second Trump administration's attorney general Pam Bondi stated that Epstein's client list was "sitting on my desk" for review, and in June, Elon Musk alleged Trump was in the files. In July, Bondi and FBI head Kash Patel announced there was no list, no evidence Epstein had blackmailed anyone, that Epstein had killed himself, and released footage showing a partial view of a common area and obscured view of the stairs leading to Epstein's cell block—though that footage was not independently verified.[266][267][268][269] A minute was found missing, where the clock jumps from 11:58:58 to 12:00:00.[270][271] An investigation found the video had been modified despite the FBI claim it was raw,[272] and three minutes were cut out of the video.[273] CBS News cited an unnamed official, who said the video had been edited to remove a minute, and an unedited version is in the FBI's possession.[274] Congress later released the full video in September, without the missing minute.[275] On July 15, 2025, Representative Thomas Massie submitted House Resolution 119–581, co-sponsored by Ro Khanna, to force the Department of Justice to release the Epstein files.[276][277][278] They announced on August 12 they would bring victims to the Capitol on September 3.[279][280]

On August 25, 2025, the House Oversight Committee issued a subpoena to Acosta requesting his testimony in the Epstein file. He was not in subpoenas the committee sent in August, which included Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton and former attorneys general Loretta Lynch, Eric Holder, William Barr, Merrick Garland, Jeff Sessions, and Alberto Gonzales. Acosta testified in October about his plea deal with Epstein, where he defended his decision to pursue a state-level case due to perceived weaknesses in federal evidence, denied knowledge of Epstein's extensive financial crimes, claims that Democrats disputed, highlighting contradictions with later evidence of his office investigating financial aspects and calling his testimony non-credible.[281]

On September 4, James O'Keefe published an exposé on Deputy Chief Joseph Schnitt of DOJ Special Operations, in which the latter said that there were "thousands and thousands of pages of files" relating to Epstein and the DOJ would "redact every Republican or conservative person in those files", while also "[leaving] all the liberal, Democratic people in those files".[282][283][284][285] Epstein's brother Mark Epstein alleged the same, stating he had heard from a "good source" that a team in Virginia was "sanitizing" and "scrubbing the files to take Republican names out."[286] On November 12, Adelita Grijalva gave the final 218th signature to Massie's discharge position, forcing the creation of the Epstein Files Transparency Act. It requires the attorney general to "make publicly available" all files pertaining to the prosecution of Epstein within 30 days, and give the Judiciary

Committees an unredacted "list of all government officials and politically exposed persons" named in the files.[287]

Estate and victim settlements

Epstein estate settlements

Epstein's estate was valued around $600 million at the time of his death.[288] His estate has became the focus of extensive litigation and settlements. Epstein's estate created a victims' compensation program that paid about $121 million to 136 claimants.[289] The estate later paid an additional $49 million to settle a victims lawsuit.[290] In 2026, the estate paid $35 million to settle another victims lawsuit.[291] In 2022, the estate also settled a lawsuit with the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands to resolve civil claims that Epstein used the territory for trafficking, paying $105 million and agreeing to share proceeds from the sale of his private islands.[292]

Bank settlements

In November 2023, JPMorgan Chase agreed to pay $290 million to resolve a class-action lawsuit brought by Epstein accusers who alleged the bank enabled his their abuse by continuing to provide him their financial services.[293] JP Morgan did not admit liability as part of the settlement.[293] Around the same time, Deutsche Bank agreed to pay $75 million to settle a similar lawsuit by Epstein accusers concerning the period when Epstein was a client there from 2013 to 2018.[294] In addition, JPMorgan later paid $75 million to settle claims by the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands related to allegations that the bank had enabled Epstein's trafficking.[295]

Legacy

Graffiti featuring the phrase on an overpass on Interstate 71 in Cincinnati

Public reaction and institutional scrutiny

Epstein's death in 2019 fueled widespread controversy and debate.

The belief that he was the victim of murder in service of a wider cover-up subsequently became a popular internet meme and conspiracy theory.[296][297]

The partial release of the Epstein files by the U.S Department of Justice in response to the Epstein Files Transparency Act prompted renewed public and media scrutiny of the case and contributed to a marked shift in public discourse about elite accountability.[298][299][300] Legal scholars, investigative journalists, and human rights experts described the disclosures as intensifying scrutiny of longstanding institutional failures which had allowed Epstein to avoid accountability, despite repeated allegations.[301][302] Commentators noted that claims concerning Epstein's extensive connections within the political, financial, and social elite–which had long been dismissed by many officials and media figures as speculative or unsubstantiated–were reassessed following the document release.[303] The case has been frequently cited as illustrative of broader class-based disparities in law enforcement and prosecutorial decision-making, and as an example of systemic corruption and elite impunity within the criminal justice system, particularly regarding the treatment of wealthy or well-connected individuals.[304]

Artworks

On July 1, 2020, a statue of Epstein was left outside the City Hall in Albuquerque, New Mexico as a satirical commentary on opposition to the removal of Confederate monuments and memorials.[305][306] A sculpture of Epstein frolicking with Trump titled *Best Friends Forever* was produced by an anonymous art group aliased "The Secret Handshake" in protest of their relationship. Its September 2025 debut at the National Mall made national news when the United States Park Police assigned with protecting the sculpture dismantled it.[307]

Documentaries

As of October 2019, HBO was creating a limited series on Epstein's life and death to be directed and executive produced by Adam McKay.[308][309] Sony Pictures Television is additionally developing a miniseries based on Epstein's life.[310] The Netflix documentary series *Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich* premiered in May 2020.[311] The Lifetime documentary *Surviving Jeffrey Epstein* premiered in August 2020.[312]

See also

- Study Group (Jewish group)

Notes

a. *According to the Department of Justice.*[4] *The list of 1,200 victims included the "relatives of victims".*[5]

b. *Pronounced /ˈɛpstiːn/* 🔊[i]

EP-steen. See also: Pronunciation of Epstein.[7]

c. *JP Morgan and Deutsche Bank settled without admission of liability.*

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